



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
PAY-AS-YOU-GO ESTIMATE**

October 16, 2000

H.R. 3767

Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act

As cleared by the Congress on October 10, 2000

Enacting this legislation would affect direct spending by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Department of State, but CBO estimates there would be no significant net impact in any year.

H.R. 3767 would reestablish the visa waiver program, which would enable persons from designated countries to visit the United States for up to 90 days without having to obtain a visa; this program expired on April 30, 2000. H.R. 3767 would make the program permanent.

Since the expiration of the waiver program in April, the INS and the Department of State have been collecting fees from issuing visas to short-term visitors who otherwise would have participated in the program. The fees charged by the INS are recorded as offsetting receipts and are available for spending on administrative costs. The fees charged by the State Department are recorded as offsetting collections and are available for spending on consular affairs. In the past, about 15 million people entered the United States annually under the waiver program, consequently, visa fee collections and spending on the administrative costs of issuing these visas will be significant under current law. Enacting H.R. 3767 would result in forgone collections, but spending by the two agencies would also be lower because no visas would be issued for short-term visitors. As a result, we estimate that there would be no significant net impact on direct spending in any year.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Mark Grabowicz and Sunita D'Monte. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.